

**Department of Health & Human Services
Administration for Children and Families**

Program Office: Office of Financial Services, Division of
Financial Integrity

**Funding Opportunity
Title:** Public Assistance Reporting Information
System (PARIS) State Partnership Grants

Announcement Type: Initial

**Funding Opportunity
Number:** HHS-2006-ACF-OA-TA-0017

CFDA Number: 93.647

**Due Date for
Applications:** 06/06/2006

Executive Summary:

The Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006 (Public Law 109-149) appropriated funds for improving the Public Assistance Reporting Information System, including grants to States to support data collection for a study of the system's effectiveness. Activities funded under this appropriation will be carried out under Section 1110 of the Social Security Act.

To implement the program and to expand the number of participating jurisdictions, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is issuing this grant announcement. Its purpose is to increase States' participation in the PARIS project through partnerships between Member States and Partner States (See *Section III.1* Additional Information on Eligibility) resulting in increased matches and a reduction in improper payments.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Legislative Authority

Public Law 109-149, December 30, 2005

PARIS is a voluntary project for those States willing to share public assistance data among a like-minded group of States that wish to maintain program integrity and detect and deter improper payments. The PARIS project has been operational and matches have been performed every quarter since August 1999. Using the Social Security Number as the key, the match process compares payouts made by States under various benefit programs (for example, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid and Food Stamps) against various databases. There are three parts of the PARIS match process: 1) the Veterans Administration (VA) database match, which determines if a client is collecting VA benefits; 2) the Interstate match where participating States during a particular quarter match against each other, which determines if a client is collecting benefits in more than one State and 3) the Federal match, which determines whether anyone receiving public assistance benefits is also collecting a payment as a U.S. Federal or military employee in the form of a retirement pension or as a current member of the military or civilian workforce. The PARIS computer facility performs the PARIS match and provides any hits to the appropriate State, where State staff can verify the data and follow pertinent procedures for notice and opportunity to contest. No permanent database is created for PARIS and all electronic data submissions from all sources are destroyed after each quarterly match run. Participating States are not charged for any costs associated with the matching process. The number of States with signed PARIS agreements is thirty-six (36).

The purpose of this grant announcement is 1) to encourage new States to join PARIS (e.g., sign a PARIS agreement and participate in the PARIS matches) and 2) to provide financial assistance to support a partnership between a Member State currently participating in PARIS and a Partner State, a State currently not participating in the PARIS Project. Either a Member State or a Partner State may initiate the development of an application. By expanding the population of the current PARIS base, more matches may result in greater dollar savings for participant States. This partnership between the two States shall facilitate the establishment of Information Technology (IT) policies and procedures for PARIS implementation in the Partner State. Further, it is intended to enhance the Partner State's capacity to participate in the PARIS Project on a regular basis after the grant is completed (at least once a year, but preferably more). During the course of the twelve month grant project period, the Member and Partner States must participate in the PARIS project at least two of the four quarterly matches available. The match periods selected should allow enough time for the States to follow-up on the match data identifying potential

improper payments and allow the ACF PARIS Project Manager, any other Federal agency or a contractor adequate time to assess the effectiveness of the PARIS match.

Separate applications and a partnership agreement must be submitted by both the Member State and the Partner State with separate budget requests. An application from a Partner State must identify its Member State and an application from a Member State must identify its Partner State. As costs are incurred for specific items delineated in the approved grant application budgets, States must adhere to HHS fiscal and grants management requirements.

The financial assistance will be available to aid Partner States in defraying costs of establishing a new IT capacity to produce PARIS input data in accordance with prescribed parameters, hiring additional staff with PARIS-related duties, possible cooperation with the ACF PARIS Project Manager, any other Federal agency or a contractor who will be evaluating the cost-effectiveness of the PARIS Project, and working in a professional manner with its Member State and the other selected awardees.

A number of parameters must be considered by the applicants to participate in the competition and to be considered for an award:

(1) The Partnership agreement must be signed by both States. Generally, this is accomplished by an authorized State official (Secretary of Department, Director of Fraud Office, etc., depending where the PARIS project will be based in the State). The teaming or partnership agreement must be submitted to ACF prior to grant award issuance. Please see Appendix A for a sample partnership agreement and/or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Applicants may use this sample as a template for constructing their agreements.

(2) The two States must agree to provide PARIS match results and data on resulting benefits, savings and/or possible cost effectiveness to the ACF PARIS Project Manager, any other Federal agency or a contractor who may be evaluating PARIS as a term and condition of the grant award. The States must take care not to release any information considered non-releasable under any relevant Federal statutes such as the Privacy Act or terms and conditions of the PARIS agreement, or in violation of any State laws within the applicable jurisdictions.

(3) Each applicant must provide a proposed budget that includes the resources and associated costs it believes are necessary to support the partnership in the match process. The proposed budgets will be

evaluated for adequacy, reasonableness and to ensure that implementation of the partnership will be both operationally effective and successful. ACF anticipates that the Partner State will have a greater need for financial assistance than the Member State. Examples of the type of activities Partner and Member States may consider under these grants include: Development of data with respect to cost efficiency in cooperation with the ACF PARIS Project Manager, any other Federal agency or a contractor; Partner State coding issues; staff time and consultations between Member States and Partner States; travel to support grant activities; follow-up on "red flags" identified through the match process; and Partner State systems development analysis and IT-related changes to accommodate the PARIS project. This list should not be considered limited or all-inclusive, but merely illustrative. Proposed budgets should include the cost of any travel-related expenses between the Member and Partner States. Grantees will be expected to attend a two-day PARIS conference and any other grantee-related meetings. Funding for these activities shall be provided separately under an ACF logistics contract.

(4) The location of the Partner State selected by the Member State will be examined to determine the appropriateness of the selection. It is recommended that Member States look to their borders (contiguous States) for those States that are NOT members of the PARIS community or other nearby States where accessible transportation between State capitols exists to help ensure that the majority of grant funds are utilized for costs other than travel.

(5) For Member States to be eligible for this funding opportunity they must have participated in at least two of the last six PARIS matches (from November 2004 through February 2006). Although Member State applicants need not submit proof that they have participated in two of the last six matches from November 2004 through February 2006 with their applications, applicants are cautioned that ACF will review applications against record information to determine this eligibility criterion.

(6) Applicants are cautioned that the ceiling for each grant award is \$175,000 for a Partner State and \$100,000 for a Member State. Applications exceeding the \$175,000/\$100,000 threshold will be considered non-responsive and will not be eligible for funding under this announcement.

(7) Separate applications must be submitted for each identified partnership???one from a Member State and one from a Partner State.

(8) The Partner State must enroll in the PARIS project and provide a copy of the PARIS agreement to ACF prior to the grant award issuance in order to document the Partner State's consent to the project. The following link shows the PARIS Agreement:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/nhsitrc/paris/agree_par.html.

(9) When participating in the matches, the Partner State must submit its data electronically through Connect-Direct to the Defense Manpower Data Center in Monterey, California, the official PARIS computer facility.

(10) Besides the Interstate and Veterans matches, States are encouraged to participate in any additional matches available, such as the Federal match. States shall submit TANF data. The Member and Partner States are encouraged to submit Medicaid and Food Stamp data when submitting their quarterly match input.

(11) If one is scheduled, representatives from both Member and Partner States must participate in a Public Forum and present results obtained.

Member States should have a thorough knowledge of the PARIS project, its procedures and intricacies of both submitting data and analyzing the resulting output. Expected outcomes from the partnership must include:

(1) Facilitating the development, support and maintenance of the PARIS project in the Partner State to ensure that a process is firmly established to strengthen and support the viability of the matching process and the potential to save funding;

(2) Conducting a needs assessment of required services, and if necessary, recommending alternatives for how they might be achieved;

(3) Developing internal operating controls and procedures related to the PARIS program in the Partner State;

(4) Facilitating networks, IT hardware, software and available resources employing best practices needed to implement PARIS in the Partner State;

(5) Coordinating the analysis of matching data to ensure that the cost benefits of the investment will be attained;

(6) Promoting the meaningful participation of the Partner State in providing the necessary input to ensure that the appropriate data has

been gathered to match in accordance with the PARIS website's specific directives;

(7) Enhancing the capacity of the Partner State to become an active participant in the PARIS project not only for the quarterly matches during the course of the grant's project period, but also thereafter; and

(8) The Member State is expected to train, assist and monitor the Partner State's input into the quarterly matches.

This list is meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive of the type of issues the State should address when preparing the application.

Additional information concerning the PARIS project and its operation is available from the website (www.acf.hhs.gov/paris) or by calling the Federal contacts listed in this grants announcement.

Background Information

The Office of Financial Services (OFS), Office of Administration, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), is responsible for the operational aspects of the PARIS project, a national program. OFS has ultimate responsibility for developing, interpreting and disseminating ACF's grant management policies. OFS fulfills this mission by providing financial management leadership and conducting activities to ensure the most effective use of ACF funding. OFS intends to closely monitor the progress of all grant activities.

PARIS assists States in formulating methodologies for identifying and decreasing improper payments. PARIS helps States validate that the individuals/families receiving benefits under the public assistance programs administered by ACF, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the Food and Nutrition Service are eligible and provides data that assists in case determinations. Approved applicants must be willing to work closely with Federal and other designated staff to coordinate, assist or evaluate the activities of this venture in providing technical assistance.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Instrument Type: Grant

Anticipated Total Priority Area Funding: \$1,100,000

Anticipated Number of Awards: 1 to 8

Ceiling on Amount of Individual Awards: \$175,000 per project period

Floor on Amount of Individual Awards: None

Average Projected Award Amount: \$175,000 per project period

Length of Project Periods: 12-month project and budget period

Awards under this announcement are subject to the availability of funds.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants:

- State governments

In the context of this grant announcement, eligible applicants include both Member States of PARIS and proposed Partner States as defined in *Section I*, Funding Opportunity Description. To be considered an eligible Member State, the State must have participated in at least two of the last six quarterly matches from November 2004 through February 2006. Any State not defined as a Member State may be considered a Partner State. The application need only identify the other State in the Partnership in lieu of attaching the actual agreement; however, a signed PARIS agreement and partnership agreement must both be provided to ACF prior to the grant award issuance. A State is defined as any State within the United States of America, its territories and the District of Columbia. Eligible applicable State agencies are encouraged to apply. (Please reference *Section III.3*, Other).

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: None

3. Other:

Any Member State may submit no more than two Partnership grant applications. All applications will be reviewed to ensure that accessible transportation exists between the capitals of the Member State and the proposed Partner State and the amount of funding requested for the Member State versus the Partner State.

D-U-N-S Requirement

All applicants must have a D&B Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S) number. On June 27, 2003, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published in the *Federal Register* a new Federal policy applicable to all Federal grant applicants. The policy requires Federal grant applicants to provide a D-U-N-S number when applying for Federal grants or cooperative agreements on or after October 1, 2003. The D-U-N-S number will be required whether an applicant is submitting a paper application or using the government-wide electronic portal, Grants.gov. A D-U-N-S number will be required for every application for a new award or renewal/continuation of an award, including applications or plans under formula, entitlement, and block grant programs, submitted on or after October 1, 2003.

Please ensure that your organization has a D-U-N-S number. You may acquire a D-U-N-S number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free D-U-N-S number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or you may request a number on-line at <http://www.dnb.com>.

Disqualification Factors

Applications that exceed the ceiling amount will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement.

Any application that fails to satisfy the deadline requirements referenced in *Section IV.3* will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement.

The following additional factors will cause an application to be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement:

- Applications that are not submitted by a State;
- Applications from Member States that have not participated in at least two of the last six quarterly PARIS matches from November 2004 through February 2006. Although Member State applicants need not submit proof that they have participated in two of the last six matches from November 2004 through February 2006,

- with their applications, applicants are cautioned that ACF will review applications against record information and will disqualify applicants that fail to meet this eligibility criterion; or
- Applications received from any applicant exceeding the two-application limit per applicant.

Please reference *Section III.1*, Additional Information on Eligibility, for relevant information pertinent to these disqualification factors.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package:

Mark Graboyes
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Financial Services/Division of Financial Integrity
370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W.
Aerospace Building, 6th Floor-East
Washington , DC 20447
Phone: 202-401-7237
Email: mgraboyes@acf.hhs.gov

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Applicants should identify what other State, either a Member State or a Partner State, they are teaming with. The teaming or partnership agreement must be submitted to ACF prior to grant award issuance. Please see Appendix A for a sample of an ideal partnership agreement and/or MOU. Applicants may use this sample as a template for constructing their agreements.

Although Member State applicants need not submit proof that they have participated in two of the last six matches from November 2004 through February 2006, with their applications, applicants are cautioned that ACF will review applications against record information to determine this eligibility criterion.

Forms and Certifications

The project description should include all the information requirements described in the specific evaluation criteria outlined in this program announcement under *Section V*. Application Review Information. In addition to the project description, the applicant needs to complete all

of the Standard Forms required as part of the application process for awards under this announcement.

Applicants seeking financial assistance under this announcement must file the appropriate Standard Forms as described in this section. All applicants must submit SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. For non-construction programs, applicants must also submit SF-424A, Budget Information and SF-424B, Assurances. For construction programs, applicants must also submit SF-424C, Budget Information and SF-424D, Assurances. The forms may be reproduced for use in submitting applications. Applicants must sign and return the standard forms with their application.

Applicants must furnish prior to award an executed copy of the SF-LLL, Certification Regarding Lobbying, when applying for an award in excess of \$100,000. Applicants who have used non-Federal funds for lobbying activities in connection with receiving assistance under this announcement shall complete a disclosure form, if applicable, with their application. Applicants must sign and return the certification with their application.

Applicants must also understand that they will be held accountable for the smoking prohibition included within Public Law (P.L.) 103-227, Title XII Environmental Tobacco Smoke (also known as the PRO-KIDS Act of 1994). A copy of the *Federal Register* notice that implements the smoking prohibition is included with this form. By signing and submitting the application, applicants are providing the necessary certification and are not required to return it.

Applicants must make the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. By signing and submitting the application, applicants are providing the necessary certification and are not required to return it. Complete the standard forms and the associated certifications and assurances based on the instructions on the forms. The forms and certifications may be found at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm>.

Note that this application prior to award requires proof of an agreement between the PARIS Member State and its Partner State as well as a signed PARIS agreement (available on the PARIS website). If submitting electronically, these agreements should be scanned and attached as an "Other" document in Grants.gov.

Please see *Section V.1* for instructions on preparing the full project description.

Please reference *Section IV.3* for details about acknowledgement of received applications.

Electronic Submission

You may submit your application to us in either electronic or paper format. To submit an application electronically, please use the <http://www.Grants.gov> site.

If you use Grants.gov, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off-line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. ACF will not accept grant applications via facsimile or email.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Before you submit an electronic application, you must complete the organization registration process as well as obtain and register "electronic signature credentials" for the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Since this process may take more than five business days, it is important to start this process early, well in advance of the application deadline. **Be sure to complete all Grants.gov registration processes listed on the Organization Registration Checklist, which can be found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/registration_checklist.html.**

Please note the following if you plan to submit your application electronically via Grants.gov:

- Electronic submission is voluntary, but strongly encouraged.
- You may access the electronic application for this program at <http://www.Grants.gov>. There you can search for the downloadable application package by utilizing the Grants.gov FIND function.
- **We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov.** We encourage applicants that submit electronically to submit well before the closing date and time so that if difficulties are encountered an applicant can still submit a hard copy via express mail.
- To use Grants.gov, you, as the applicant, must have a D-U-N-S number and register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). You should allow a minimum of five days to complete the CCR registration. **REMINDER: CCR registration expires each year and thus must be updated annually. You cannot upload an application to Grants.gov without having a current CCR registration AND electronic signature credentials for the AOR.**

- The electronic application is submitted by the AOR. To submit electronically, the AOR must obtain and register electronic signature credentials approved by the organization's E-Business Point of Contact who maintains the organization's CCR registration.
- You may submit all documents electronically, including all information typically included on the SF-424 and all necessary assurances and certifications.
- Your application must comply with any page limitation requirements described in this program announcement.
- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. ACF will retrieve your application from Grants.gov.
- ACF may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date.
- You will not receive additional point value because you submit a grant application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you submit an application in hard copy.
- If you encounter difficulties in using Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Help Desk at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at support@grants.gov to report the problem and obtain assistance.
- Checklists and registration brochures are maintained at <http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted> to assist you in the registration process.
- When submitting electronically via Grants.gov, applicants must comply with all due dates **AND** times referenced in *Section IV.3*.

Hard Copy Submission

Applicants that are submitting their application in paper format should submit one original and two copies of the complete application. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by an authorized representative, have original signatures, and be unbound.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Due Date for Applications: 06/06/2006

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is referenced above. Applications received after 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on the

due date will be classified as late and will not be considered in the current competition.

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that applications are mailed or hand-delivered or submitted electronically well in advance of the application due date and time.

Mail

Applications that are submitted by mail must be received no later than 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on the due date referenced above at the address listed in *Section IV.6*.

Hand Delivery

Applications hand carried by applicants, applicant couriers, other representatives of the applicant, or by overnight/express mail couriers must be received on or before the due date referenced above, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., eastern time, at the address referenced in *Section IV.6*, between Monday and Friday (excluding Federal holidays).

Electronic Submission

Applications submitted electronically via Grants.gov must be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on the due date referenced above.

ACF cannot accommodate transmission of applications by facsimile or email.

Late Applications

Applications that do not meet the requirements above are considered late applications. ACF shall notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered in the current competition.

ANY APPLICATION RECEIVED AFTER 4:30 P.M., EASTERN TIME, ON THE DUE DATE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR COMPETITION.

Extension of Deadlines

ACF may extend application deadlines when circumstances such as acts of God (floods, hurricanes, etc.) occur; when there are widespread disruptions of mail service; or in other rare cases. A determination to extend or waive deadline requirements rests with the Chief Grants Management Officer.

Receipt acknowledgement for application packages will not be provided to applicants who submit their package via mail, courier services, or by hand delivery. Applicants will receive an electronic acknowledgement for applications that are submitted via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

Checklist

What to Submit	Required Content	Required Form or Format	When to Submit
Budget Narrative/Justification	See Sections IV.2 and V	Found in Sections IV.2 and V	By application due date.
Partnership Agreement	See Sections I and III.3	Agreement between Member and Partner states.	By date of award.
PARIS Agreement	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/nhsitrc/paris/agree_par.html	By date of award.
Certification Regarding Environmental Tobacco Smoke	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By date of award.
Project Abstract	See Sections IV.2 and V	Found in Sections IV.2 and V	By application due date.
Project Description	See Sections IV.2 and V	Found in Sections IV.2 and V	By application due date.
SF-424A	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By application due date.
Assurances	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf/hhs/gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By date of award.
SF-424B	See Section	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By application due

	IV.2		date.
SF-424	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By application due date.
SF-LLL Certification Regarding Lobbying	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By date of award.
Support Letters	See Section I	Support Letters from Partner State.	By date of award
Table of Contents	See Section IV.2	Found in Section IV.2	By application due date.

4. Intergovernmental Review:

State Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

This program is covered under Executive Order (EO) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

As of August 1, 2005, the following jurisdictions have elected to participate in the EO process: Arkansas, California, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, West Virginia, Wisconsin, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands. As these jurisdictions have elected to participate in the Executive Order process, they have established SPOCs. Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of prospective applications and receive instructions. Applicants must submit all required materials, if any, to the SPOC and indicate the date of this submittal (or the date of contact if no submittal is required) on the Standard Form 424, item 16a.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application deadline to comment on proposed new or competing continuation awards. SPOCs are encouraged to eliminate the submission of routine endorsements as official recommendations. Additionally, SPOCs are requested to clearly differentiate between mere advisory comments and those official State process recommendations, which may trigger the "accommodate or explain" rule.

When comments are submitted directly to ACF, they should be addressed to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, 370 L'Enfant Promenade SW., 4th floor, Washington, DC 20447.

Although the remaining jurisdictions have chosen not to participate in the process, entities that meet the eligibility requirements of the program are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory, Commonwealth, etc. does not have a SPOC. Therefore, applicants from these jurisdictions, or for projects administered by Federally recognized Indian Tribes, need take no action in regard to EO 12372.

The official list, including addresses, of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in EO 12372 can be found on the following URL: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>.

5. Funding Restrictions:

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction and purchase of real property are not allowable activities or expenditures under this grant award.

Foreign travel is prohibited. Equipment purchases are not allowed, although software, if necessary to support PARIS data development and analysis, may be acquired by the Partner state.

6. Other Submission Requirements:

Please see *Sections IV.2* and *IV.3* for deadline information and other application requirements.

Submit applications to one of the following addresses:

Submission by Mail

Daphne Weeden
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management

370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W.
Aerospace Building, 6th Floor-East
Washington, DC 20447

Hand Delivery

Daphne Weeden
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management
901 D Street, S.W.
Aerospace Building, 2nd Floor-East
Washington, DC 20024

Electronic Submission

Please see *Section IV.2* for guidelines and requirements when submitting applications electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13)

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed and reviewing the collection information.

The project description is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 4/30/2007.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

1. Criteria:

Part I THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise and complete. It should address the activity for which Federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. In

preparing the project description, information that is responsive to each of the requested evaluation criteria must be provided. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS

ACF is particularly interested in specific project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

Pages should be numbered and a table of contents should be included for easy reference.

Part II GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING A FULL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

Applicants that are required to submit a full project description shall prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

PROJECT SUMMARY/ABSTRACT

Provide a summary of the project description (one page or less) with reference to the funding request.

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance must be demonstrated and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning

studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as needed. In developing the project description, the applicant may volunteer or be requested to provide information on the total range of projects currently being conducted and supported (or to be initiated), some of which may be outside the scope of the program announcement.

RESULTS OR BENEFITS EXPECTED

Identify the results and benefits to be derived.

APPROACH

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and state your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than others. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

If any data is to be collected, maintained, and/or disseminated, clearance may be required from the OMB. This clearance pertains to any "collection of information that is conducted or sponsored by ACF."

Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

EVALUATION

Provide a narrative addressing how the conduct of the project and the results of the project will be evaluated. In addressing the evaluation of results, state how you will determine the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives and the extent to which the

accomplishment of objectives can be attributed to the project. Discuss the criteria to be used to evaluate results, and explain the methodology that will be used to determine if the needs identified and discussed are being met and if the project results and benefits are being achieved. With respect to the conduct of the project, define the procedures to be employed to determine whether the project is being conducted in a manner consistent with the work plan presented and discuss the impact of the project's various activities that address the project's effectiveness.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Describe the precise location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project. Maps or other graphic aids may be attached.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The following are requests for additional information that must be included in the application:

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Provide a budget with line-item detail and detailed calculations for each budget object class identified on the Budget Information Form (SF-424A or SF-424C). Detailed calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching is a requirement, include a breakout by the funding sources identified in Block 15 of the SF-424.

Provide a narrative budget justification that describes how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES, TOTAL INDIRECT CHARGES, TOTAL PROJECT COSTS

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

The following evaluation criteria appear in weighted descending order. The corresponding score values indicate the relative importance that ACF places on each evaluation criterion; however, applicants need not

develop their applications precisely according to the order presented. Application components may be organized such that a reviewer will be able to follow a seamless and logical flow of information (i.e., from a broad overview of the project to more detailed information about how it will be conducted).

In considering how applicants will carry out the responsibilities addressed under this announcement, competing applications for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated against the following criteria:

RESULTS OR BENEFITS EXPECTED - 25 points

The application will be evaluated in terms of the extent to which it identifies results and benefits to be derived and the anticipated contributions to the advancement of the PARIS project such as identified in the program announcement. The application will be evaluated on the extent to which it clearly describes project benefits and results as they relate to the objectives of the project and provide a basis as to what extent the project will build on current practice and best practices to contribute to the continuing success of the PARIS project.

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE - 25 points

The application will be evaluated in terms of the extent to which it describes the context of the proposed demonstration project, including the environment and magnitude of the Member-Partner State relationship and what will be resolved and the needs to be addressed. Applicants requesting funds should include a summary/abstract of the project goals and projected accomplishments during the grant's period of performance.

APPROACH - 25 points

Applications will be evaluated in terms of the extent to which they include a plan that: (1) reflects the understanding of the characteristics, needs and services that are available from the PARIS project and the potential for a partnership agreement achieving the provision of services that directly address the fulfillment of the PARIS project; (2) is appropriate and feasible; (3) can be reliably evaluated;

and (4) if successfully implemented, can be sustained after Federal funding has ceased.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - 15 points

Adequacy and reasonableness of proposed budget for accomplishing all program objectives.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION - 10 points

Proximity of PARIS Member State and its Partner State. The extent to which applicants demonstrate that accessible transportation exists between Member and Partner State capitals to aid in ensuring that a majority of grant funds will be used for costs other than travel.

2. Review and Selection Process:

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application.

If an insufficient number of acceptable applications, as determined by ACF, are received under this program announcement, ACF has the option of negotiating and awarding grant amounts higher than the \$175,000 award ceiling for Partner States and \$100,000 for Member States, set forth in this announcement among those applicants who have submitted acceptable applications.

Initial Screening: Each application submitted will be screened to determine whether it was received by the closing date and time.

Applications received by the closing date and time will be reviewed for completeness and conformity with the requirements listed in this announcement. Late applications or those exceeding the funding limit will be returned to the applicants with a notation that they were unacceptable and will not be reviewed.

Evaluation of Applications: Applications that pass the initial screening will be reviewed and rated by a panel based on the program elements and review criteria presented in relevant sections of this program announcement.

The review criteria are designed to enable the review panel to assess the quality of a proposed project and determine the likelihood of its success. The criteria are closely related to each other and are considered as a whole in judging the overall quality of an application.

The review panel awards points only to applications that are responsive to the program elements and relevant review criteria within the context of this program announcement.

ACF will use the reviewer scores when considering competing applications. Reviewer scores will weigh heavily in funding decisions, but will not be the only factors considered. Applications generally will be considered in order of the average scores assigned by the review panel. Because other important factors are taken into consideration, highly ranked applications are not guaranteed funding. These other considerations include, for example: comments of reviewers and government officials; staff evaluation and input; amount and duration of the grant requested and the proposed project's consistency and harmony with the goals of the PARIS project; geographic distribution of applications; previous program performance of applicants; compliance with grant terms under previous HHS grants; previous audit findings; and applicant's progress in resolving any final audit disallowance on previous ACF or other Federal agency grants.

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications that are approved but unfunded may be held over for funding in the next funding cycle, pending the availability of funds, for a period not to exceed one year.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates:

It is anticipated that the grant awards will be awarded in the third quarter of 2006.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Award Notices:

The successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Financial Assistance Award document, which sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-Federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The Financial Assistance Award will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail.

Organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified in writing.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Grantees are subject to the requirements in 45 CFR Part 74 (non-governmental) or 45 CFR Part 92 (governmental).

Direct Federal grants, sub-award funds, or contracts under this ACF program shall not be used to support inherently religious activities such as religious instruction, worship, or proselytization. Therefore, organizations must take steps to separate, in time or location, their inherently religious activities from the services funded under this program. Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against Federal funding of inherently religious activities, can be found at the HHS web site at: <http://www.os.dhhs.gov/fbci/waisgate21.pdf>.

Faith-based and community organizations may reference the "Guidance to Faith-Based and Community Organizations on Partnering with the Federal Government" at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/guidance/index.html>.

3. Reporting Requirements:

Grantees will be required to submit program progress and financial reports (SF-269 found at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm>) throughout the project period. Program progress and financial reports are due 30 days after the reporting period. Final programmatic and financial reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period.

Program Progress Reports: Quarterly
Financial Reports: Quarterly

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Program Office Contact:

Mark Graboyes
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Financial Services/Division of Financial Integrity
370 L' Enfant Promenade, S.W.
Aerospace Building, 6th Floor-East
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: 202-401-7237
Email: mgraboyes@acf.hhs.gov

Grants Management Office Contact:

Daphne Weeden
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management
370 L' Enfant Promenade, S.W.
Aerospace Building, 6th Floor-East
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: 202-401-5513
Email: ACFOGME-Grants@acf.hhs.gov

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

Date: 04/05/2006

Curtis L. Coy
Director
Office of Administration

APPENDIX A**SAMPLE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT****MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)****BY AND BETWEEN**

The Department of _____ from the (name of State)

And

The Department of _____ from the (name of State)

Background

The (name of Department _____) and the (name of Department _____) applied for grants from the Administration for Children and Families, a part of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, to participate in the Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS). This system generates a national data base of individuals receiving public assistance benefits funded by the Federal Government. The (name of Department _____), a current PARIS participant, received a "Mentoring Grant" and the (name of Department _____) received a New Participant grant. The grant period is from _____ to _____. The goal of ACF and the mentoring State is to increase the number of States participating in the PARIS Project thereby increasing the national coverage and potential number of matches PARIS provides. This in turn will decrease duplicate participation in public assistance programs by customers receiving benefits in multiple States at the same time or receiving benefits from their own States that they are not entitled. The New Participant State will benefit from the information provided by PARIS in determining eligibility of benefit applicants and will also benefit from the Mentoring State's experience in the development of processes required to participate in PARIS.

Purpose

This MOU seeks to establish a partnership between the _____ and _____. The purpose of the partnership is for the mentoring State to mentor and support the _____ in the development, implementation, evaluation and maintenance of the PARIS Project. Both parties view the partnership as a mutually beneficial opportunity.

Roles and Responsibilities

The _____ will implement PARIS according to the PARIS agreement set forth by the ACF. The _____ will mentor and support _____ in their endeavor. Neither party will be held financially responsible to the other, as each State will receive an individual grant. Each State will provide data to ACF as outlined in the PARIS grant.

Confidentiality

Both State Departments will maintain confidentiality of all private data and information collected in accordance with individual confidentiality policies set forth the by their individual agencies and in accordance with Federal regulations specified in the PARIS agreement.

Duration and Change of MOU

This MOU is effective upon signature of both parties and shall continue in effect until the ending date of the grant. Any changes to this memorandum will be negotiated and addressed by the parties signing this memorandum or their designees.

Approved by:

Mentoring State

New Participant State

Date

Date